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Report of the Peacebuilding Commission

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Report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its first session

Executive Summary

In response to a growing recognition that international peacebuilding efforts have lacked an overall strategic approach and coherence, world leaders at the 2005 World Summit agreed to establish the Peacebuilding Commission. In its first year of operations, the Commission has focused its attention on Burundi and Sierra Leone and was committed to an inclusive and nationally driven process aimed at maximizing the involvement of all relevant actors on the ground, including civil society, and in the broader international community. Furthermore, the Organizational Committee of the Commission has begun to address key organizational, procedural and methodological issues.

The Commission adopted the provisional rules of procedure which, in order to keep them current and effective, will continue to be reviewed through an expert group. In addition, standing invitations were extended to the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Community and the Organization of Islamic Conference to participate in all meetings of the Commission, except as deemed otherwise by the Chair in consultation with Member States. The provisional guidelines on the participation of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, were also adopted, on the understanding that they will be subject to review, evaluation and possible further development after six months from the date of their adoption. A Working Group on Lessons Learned was established to accumulate best practices and lessons on critical peacebuilding issues.

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The Commission met in a country-specific format to consider the cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone, adopting workplans and sending field missions to both countries to collect information and analysis from the ground. The Commission also identified four critical priority areas for peace consolidation in each of the two countries. Processes for the development of integrated peacebuilding strategies (IPBS) were also launched. The Government of Burundi, with the support of the United Nations and the Commission, conducted consultations with key stakeholders on the ground to identify challenges and threats to the consolidation of peace. This resulted in the development of the Strategic Framework for Burundi, an important step towards the development of the IPBS for Burundi, which will guide the Government's engagement with all stakeholders in the country and the international community. The Government of Sierra Leone, with support from the United Nations and the Commission, initiated consultations for the development of its IPBS, and this will undergo further refinement at the country level after Presidential and Parliamentary elections in August 2007. It will be considered during the latter half of 2007.

The main challenge now facing the Commission is to maximize its impact on the ground to make the United Nations peacebuilding architecture an effective instrument of international collaboration in support of countries emerging from conflict. The Commission's future work will need to focus on ensuring that peacebuilding processes remain on track and that challenges and gaps are addressed in a timely and coherent manner by all relevant actors and in accordance with the IPBS. A number of challenges and outstanding issues need to be addressed in the coming year, including further development of the Commission's working methods and monitoring mechanisms for the IPBS; enhancing operational relationships with other intergovernmental bodies and regional and subregional organizations; and improving interaction with the field based on lessons learned during its first year of operations.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), which requested the Peacebuilding Commission to submit an annual report to the General Assembly for debate and review. The report shall also be submitted to the Security Council, pursuant to resolution 1646 (2005) for an annual debate. The report addresses the work of the Peacebuilding Commission since its inauguration in June 2006, identifies some major challenges of peacebuilding and offers conclusions and recommendations.

II. Overview

2. In response to a growing recognition that international peacebuilding efforts have lacked an overall strategic approach and coherence, world leaders at the 2005 World Summit agreed to establish the Peacebuilding Commission (see General Assembly resolution 60/1). Countries emerging from conflict face a unique set of challenges and unless they are identified and effectively addressed, these countries face a high risk of relapsing into violence. The Commission was therefore created to serve as a dedicated institutional mechanism to address these special needs and to assist these countries in laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development.

3. In its first year of operations, recognizing that peacebuilding must address the situation on the ground and make a difference to the countries and their populations, the Commission has focused its attention on two countries, Burundi and Sierra Leone, which were placed on the agenda of the Commission pursuant to paragraph 12 of the founding resolutions.[1] With their full support and through the Commission's country-specific configurations, the Commission has initiated processes of engagement with relevant United Nations and non-United Nations actors involved in peacebuilding in both countries. The Commission's work to date has been focused on maintaining international attention on both countries, and providing consultations in order to enhance the peace consolidation efforts led by their governments and with the help of other local stakeholders. This has also led to the decision to formulate integrated peacebuilding strategies (IPBS) as the basis for the Commission's sustained support for Sierra Leone and Burundi.

4. The Commission has so far employed a range of methods in the conduct of its work. These have included field missions, videoconferencing with key stakeholders in Sierra Leone and Burundi, thematic and country-specific configurations and special briefings from high-level United Nations officials and other experts. The Commission will also need to identify ways of improving coherence and synergies across its numerous activities and configurations in order to contribute to better peacebuilding policy and practice.

[1] The Governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone sent letters to the Presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly requesting to be placed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. On that basis, the Security Council referred the two countries to the Commission for its consideration (see PBC/1/OC/2).

III. Work of the Commission

5. During the reporting period, under the leadership of the Chairperson of the Commission (Angola), Vice-Chairs (El Salvador and Norway) and Coordinators chairing the country-specific configurations (Netherlands and Norway), the Commission has begun to lay the foundation for its future work. It has met in various configurations, including the Organizational Committee, which held 10 formal meetings and six informal meetings; country-specific configurations, which held five formal meetings and eight informal meetings on Burundi, and five formal meetings and five informal meetings on Sierra Leone; and three thematic meetings and three informal procedural meetings of the working group on lessons learned. The Commission also held one informal meeting of a joint country-specific configuration and briefings by representatives and experts from the United Nations system and other international organizations.

A. Organizational Committee

6. The Organizational Committee addressed some key organizational, procedural and methodological issues in its first year of operations. Decisions of the Organizational Committee have defined the framework for the operations of the respective configurations of the Commission; its work has been managed through its provisional rules of procedure, with certain pending procedural issues referred to an ad hoc working group. It adopted the provisional rules of procedure of the Commission through a consultative process among Member States (see PBC/1/OC/3). To keep these rules current and effective, in light of its practical work and in accordance with rule 6, the Organizational Committee agreed, in its meeting on 12 December 2006, to review these rules through the establishment of an expert group. While mindful of the intergovernmental character of the Commission, the rules provide a set of guidelines that reflect the flexible, transparent and inclusive nature of its work. The provisional rules of procedure task the Chairperson with presenting conclusions and recommendations, where appropriate, as agreed to by consensus among Member States.

7. The Organizational Committee, in February 2007, agreed on a concept paper, which provided the framework for the development of an IPBS, and adopted a medium-term calendar for the Commission's wide-ranging activities up to June 2007 (see chronology of formal meetings of the Organizational Committee in annex I).

8. In October 2006, the Organizational Committee established an ad hoc working group on pending issues to address those aspects which needed further elaboration in the provisional rules of procedure, especially the implementation of paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005) concerning the participation of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other institutional donors, as well as the modalities for civil society participation in meetings of the Commission. In this regard, the Organizational Committee took a decision on 16 May 2007 to extend standing invitations to the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Community and the Organization of Islamic Conference to participate in all meetings of the Commission, with the exception of certain meetings of the Organizational

Committee which may be deemed by the Chairperson, in consultation with Member States, to be limited only to Member States (see PBC/1/OC/14).

9. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Pending Issues succeeded in finding a formula that would ensure active and productive participation of civil society, including non-governmental organizations which are most relevant to peacebuilding efforts in the countries under consideration, with particular attention to women's organizations and the private sector. The provisional guidelines were subsequently adopted on 6 June 2007 by the Organizational Committee on the understanding that they will be subject to review and evaluation after six months from the date of their adoption with a view to explore the possibility of their further development.

B. Country-specific meetings

10. According to its mandate, the Commission launched, between July and December 2006, its first phase of substantive consideration of Burundi and Sierra Leone, focusing on enabling country-specific configurations to establish their structure and ensure the participation of key stakeholders and actors. In January and February 2007, the Commission adopted six-month workplans for each of the countries, which outlined a series of formal and informal meetings at Headquarters as well as field missions to both Burundi and Sierra Leone in order to provide the necessary visibility and receive first-hand information and analysis from the ground (see annex IV).[2] In addition to other outcomes, the Commission's engagement promoted dialogue and interaction between the international community and the country and between the government and other stakeholders at the country level and resulted in a US$ 35 million allocation for each country from the Peacebuilding Fund. Furthermore, building on existing strategies and frameworks in-country and based on the identified peacebuilding gaps and priorities, the Commission also launched discussions on developing an IPBS for each country to ensure coherent, prioritized approaches that involve international donors and agencies.

11. Furthermore, consistent with the mandate to incorporate a gender perspective in its work, the Commission has considered human rights and gender equality issues both in its country-specific work and in thematic discussions. Gender equality was identified as a critical cross-cutting issue for peace consolidation in both Burundi and Sierra Leone. In addition, it discussed economic reconstruction and rehabilitation and noted that a comprehensive set of risk reduction strategies should be at the forefront of all efforts aimed at sustaining peace, initiating development and promoting post-conflict recovery in both countries. These strategies could include, where appropriate, education and training, agricultural development, private sector reform and an increase in Governments' capacity to monitor and establish the necessary conditions for external investment. In this context, the Commission also drew on previous experience within the United Nations system and the World Bank in other situations to identify critical needs for post-conflict peacebuilding.

[2] For Chair's summaries of these formal country-specific meetings, see PBC/BDI/SR.1 and 2; and PBC/SLE/SR.1 and 2.

1. Burundi

12. In recent years, significant progress has been made in the consolidation of peace in Burundi with the establishment of an inclusive government, the adoption of a new constitution, the nolding of free and fair elections and the signing of a Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement between the Government and Palipehutu-FNL. South Africa's facilitation, the Regional Peace Initiative, chaired by Uganda, as well as the support from the African Union, the United Nations, and the international community have been instrumental in strengthening Burundi's peacemaking and peace consolidation efforts.

13. The Commission's formal country-specific meetings on Burundi on 13 October 2006 identified critical priorities for peace consolidation and reducing the country's risk of relapse into conflict, which were identified by the Government of Burundi in consultation with other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and international partners. As such, the Commission and the Government of Burundi agreed on four critical priority areas, as follows:

(a) *Promoting good governance*. The Government has identified the history of poor governance in the country as one of the root causes of the conflict. The Commission took note of Burundi's efforts to improve governance at various levels and underlined that democracy should be consolidated through dialogue with and inclusion of all actors in Burundian society. Support is needed for the emergence of transformational leadership in the country, building the capacity of various stakeholders for good governance and giving adequate consideration to gender, youth and regional dimensions of good governance. The Commission examined the critical need to renew efforts to remove obstacles to a constructive dialogue between the Government and Palipehutu-FNL.

(b) *Strengthening the rule of law*. Taking into account the problems related to impunity, the existence of weaknesses in the justice system and lack of understanding of the history and root causes of the conflict in Burundi, the Commission discussed how national efforts to strengthen the rule of law should be pursued and supported with a view to ensuring the fair administration of justice, combating impunity, and ensuring the independence of the judiciary. Modernizing correction services, creating an independent national human rights commission and ombudsman's office, promoting the Parliament's enactment and revision of national legislation to ensure its compliance with international human rights standards, and establishing transitional justice mechanisms recommended by the Secretary-General in his report to the Security Council on 11 March 2005 (S/2005/158) are crucial elements of this endeavour.

(c) *Reform of the security sector*. The Commission discussed the need to reform and develop the security sector according to the relevant provisions of the peace agreements and the principles of rule of law, human rights and good governance. It also noted that the disarming of the civilian population and the control and non-proliferation of small arms should be pursued, including in their subregional dimensions.

(d) *Ensuring community recovery*. Peacebuilding efforts should result in peace dividends for the most vulnerable populations, including by addressing hunger and poverty. The need to address the land issue and to support interventions to improve the lives of people in the short term is an important aspect of sustaining

the fragile peace. Specific attention should be paid to young people in the poor neighbourhoods of Bujumbura, particularly "self-demobilized" youths, young returnees who do not own land in rural areas, and youths in internally displaced camps. The community recovery principles of reducing inequality, providing tangible "quick-wins", and increasing participation are central to the Government's plans to develop human capital through the improvement of basic services.

14. A delegation of seven members of the Organizational Committee and the Country-Specific configuration travelled to Burundi in April 2007 on a field mission, funded through voluntary contributions to a trust fund, to obtain first-hand information about the situation on the ground, where they assessed peacebuilding challenges, discussed the gaps within priority areas of peacebuilding with the Government, civil society organizations, the private sector, women's organizations and international partners, and communicated the main principles and purposes of the Commission to stakeholders on the ground, including the need to maintain international attention and support for Burundi's peacebuilding efforts. The delegation from New York was joined by 13 representatives of the Commission in Bujumbura (see PBC/1/BDI/2).

15. An important outcome of the mission was a reaffirmation of an understanding from the Government of Burundi on the next steps forward for the Commission's engagement with the country. The mission also reaffirmed the importance of the subregional dimensions of peacebuilding, through discussions with the Executive Secretary of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region and Representatives of neighbouring countries.

16. Following the Commission's agreement that the elaboration of an IPBS should be vested with the national Government, the Government of Burundi in February 2007, with the support of the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), launched consultations with key stakeholders on the ground, including civil society organizations, the private sector, religious communities, political parties, United Nations agencies and bilateral and multilateral partners, with input from the Commission including during its field visit, in order to identify challenges and threats within priority areas. This resulted in a consensus that the Strategic Framework will guide the engagement of the Government of Burundi with all stakeholders in the country and with the international community in the pursuit of sustainable peace.

17. The Strategic Framework builds on existing political and development frameworks that define the country's priorities for integrated peacebuilding, particularly the 2000 Arusha Agreements, 2003 Global Agreement on Ceasefire with CNDD-FDD and 2006 agreements with Palipehutu-FNL, the Government's five-year plan (2005-2010), the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2007-2010), the Pact on Security, Stability and Development for the Great Lakes Region, and relevant resolutions and declarations of the Security Council on Burundi. When fully completed, the Strategic Framework should provide an updated and conflict-sensitive analysis of priorities, constraints and gaps in achieving the goals set in these strategic documents, focusing on the root causes of the conflict and the need to prioritize interventions that will prevent the country's relapse into conflict.

18. The Strategic Framework recognizes that Burundi will need the sustained attention of the international community until the establishment of foundations for sustainable peace and development. It reflects the mutual engagements of the

Government of Burundi and of the Commission to maintain their dialogue, as well as the support required from national and international partners to work towards consolidating peace. The Strategic Framework also reflects a commitment to devise a transparent and consultative process of assessing collective progress. On 20 June 2007, the Commission endorsed the development of the IPBS for Burundi, of which the Strategic Framework is an important step. A key next step is to develop the in-country tracking and monitoring mechanism based on the monitoring mechanism and timelines established for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and other existing frameworks. The Commission also considered the need for mobilizing resources from international partners to support the implementation of this framework and the importance of honouring pledges and commitments such as those made at the round table in May 2007.

2. Sierra Leone

19. The Commission in its Sierra Leone country-specific meeting on 12 October 2006 endorsed critical priority areas for peace consolidation and reducing the country's risk of relapse into conflict identified by the government of Sierra Leone in consultation with other stakeholders. Furthermore, in January 2007 the Commission developed a six-month workplan with the primary objective of developing an IPBS as a framework for cooperation between Sierra Leone and members of the Commission. This IPBS will clearly outline the mutual responsibilities of the Government of Sierra Leone and the Commission for medium-term peace consolidation and serve as the framework to mobilize additional resources and ensure sustained international attention.

20. From the outset, the Government of Sierra Leone and its international partners have noted that since the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement in 1999, Sierra Leone has made tremendous progress in securing peace and post-conflict recovery. Existing strategic frameworks and planning documents such as Vision 2025, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the Peace Consolidation Strategy (PCS), the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the Improved Governance and Accountability Pact (IGAP), as well as relevant resolutions and declarations of the Security Council, have guided the work of the Government and its partners in this regard.

21. Notwithstanding many of the achievements in restoring stability and peace over the last few years, a number of critical peacebuilding challenges as well as the root causes of conflict in Sierra Leone are yet to be fully addressed. In addition, there are several immediate constraints to the implementation of existing commitments and frameworks. At the October 2006 meeting of the Commission's country-specific configuration on Sierra Leone, the Government of Sierra Leone, in consultation with other stakeholders, highlighted four critical areas where further efforts are needed both to address root causes of the conflict and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. In addition to crosscutting issues such as gender equality and human rights, the critical areas identified were as follows:

(a) *Youth unemployment and disempowerment.* The Commission noted that this remains one of the most serious threats to Sierra Leone's stability. It discussed how the challenge of addressing unemployment in Sierra Leone is closely linked to the creation of long-term economic growth and development of an enabling

environment for private sector development and foreign investment, although it was noted that short-term engagements are also needed. A number of issues need to be addressed in this context, such as agriculture, improved availability of electricity, water and other basic infrastructure, good governance and anti-corruption measures, support for entrepreneurs and self-employed people, and the national management of the country's natural resources for the benefit of the population and the Government. The Commission will, inter alia, focus its efforts on mobilizing support for the Government of Sierra Leone's policy reforms, such as the review of the National Youth Policy, legislative reform and enhancing coordination and prioritization of efforts;

(b) *Justice and security-sector reform*. Despite the progress made in the re-establishment of judicial institutions throughout Sierra Leone, the Commission considered that the lack of access to formal justice for the majority of the population coupled with severe lack of capacity of the judiciary and backlog in court cases create serious concerns for peace and stability. The Commission will focus its efforts in this area on, inter alia, how to assist the Government of Sierra Leone in the constitutional and legislative reform processes. The Commission also noted the need for timely implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations and the need to strengthen the capacity of the Government to meet its obligations in this regard. The Government of Sierra Leone, with the support of the international community, has made some progress on security-sector reform and recovery. However, the Commission discussed critical issues such as the sustainability and the size of the Republic of Sierra Leone's Armed Forces, improvement of relations between community and police and advancement in the living and working conditions of the armed forces still must be addressed;

(c) *Democracy consolidation and good governance*. Although the Government of Sierra Leone has made progress towards rebuilding State institutions and expanding State authority throughout the country, Parliament and the judiciary are still extremely weak and national institutions such as the National Electoral Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission need further support and capacity-building. Efforts in support of governance institutions should be complemented through enhanced dialogue among political parties and the reconciliation and full participation of all segments of the population, especially youth and women in decision-making. The Commission recognized that the holding of Presidential and Parliamentary elections scheduled for August 2007 will represent an important step towards the consolidation of peace and democracy in the country;

(d) *Capacity-building*. The civil war during the 1990s caused serious damage to the already limited capacity of governmental institutions and other stakeholders in delivering services, implementing reforms and ensuring adequate economic and financial management. The Commission's engagement in this area could focus on supporting the Government of Sierra Leone's efforts in developing a comprehensive civil service reform programme that, inter alia, enhances management and provides training opportunities.

22. In March 2007 a delegation of nine members of the Organizational Committee and the Country-Specific configuration, funded through voluntary contributions to a trust fund, visited Sierra Leone. The delegation was successful in enriching the discussions of the Commission by obtaining first-hand information about the situation on the ground, in particular, the challenges to peace consolidation. The

delegation's visit reinforced a strong conviction that the Commission can play an important role in Sierra Leone, particularly by fostering greater dialogue and coordination among all stakeholders working on peace consolidation. The visit also reaffirmed the importance of subregional dimensions of peacebuilding in Sierra Leone and stressed the importance of supporting the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone in infrastructure development and provision of basic services (see PBC/1/SLE/2).

23. A key outcome of the Commission's visit to Sierra Leone was the agreement on the timeframe and the process for the development of an IPBS for the Commission's engagement with the country. The development and implementation of the IPBS will be firmly vested with the Government of Sierra Leone, supported by the United Nations, in particular through UNIOSIL, and assisted by multilateral and bilateral partners and civil society. It was agreed that the IPBS would not replace or supersede existing frameworks such as the Poverty Reduction Paper or the Peace Consolidation Strategy but rather build on them by identifying key peacebuilding priorities and strengthening national and international commitment for their implementation.

24. The Government, with the support from a United Nations technical mission consisting of the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP and UNDGO, initiated consultations for the development of the IPBS and an annotated outline was discussed in an informal meeting of the Commission in May 2007. Subsequently, the Government, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders in the country, developed a first draft of the IPBS for a discussion with the Commission in June 2007. The IPBS will undergo further revisions at the country level after Sierra Leone's Presidential and Parliamentary elections scheduled to be held in August 2007 and will be agreed during the latter half of 2007. In this context, it should be noted that the Security Council has requested the Commission to continue tracking progress on peacebuilding issues in Sierra Leone, paying particular attention in planning for the forthcoming elections. Furthermore, at its meeting on 22 June 2007, the Commission adopted a Chair's Declaration on the upcoming Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in Sierra Leone (see PBC/1/SLE/4).

C. Working Group on Lessons Learned

25. In December 2006, the Organizational Committee established a Working Group on Lessons Learned, coordinated and chaired by the Ambassador of El Salvador, to accumulate best practices and lessons on critical peacebuilding issues. The primary objective of the Working Group has been to enrich the deliberations of the Commission with respect to the countries on its agenda. The Working Group has benefited greatly from the expertise of the Commission members that have post-conflict experience.

26. In the Commission's first year, the Working Group held three informal meetings focusing on the lessons and good practices associated with: (a) risk reduction and confidence-building in the lead up to post-conflict elections; (b) post-conflict frameworks for cooperation; and (c) regional approaches to peacebuilding. In organizing these meetings, the Working Group drew on the expertise of national actors, as well as civil society organizations and academic institutions and a number

of recommendations were made (see annexes VI, VII, and VIII for Chair's summary notes from these meetings).

D. Relations with other intergovernmental bodies

27. In early 2007, the Security Council and the General Assembly held separate debates on the Commission. This first exchange of views between the Commission and the other intergovernmental bodies highlighted the need for periodic contacts to further enrich their respective consideration of country-specific situations.

IV. Peacebuilding Fund

28. The Peacebuilding Fund was launched on 11 October 2006 by the Secretary-General at the request of the General Assembly. According to its terms of reference (A/60/984, annex), the Fund's greatest value is in the early stages of a recovery effort, when other financing mechanisms are not yet available. The Fund is available for allocation both to countries under consideration by the Commission and to other post-conflict countries, as a separate mechanism from the Commission. A comprehensive report on the Fund's first year of work will be issued by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly during the main part of the sixty-second session.

29. The Fund was established to operate as a rapid-disbursing, emergency peace fund for countries emerging from conflict. Because both Burundi and Sierra Leone are several years beyond an immediate post-conflict stage, the priorities for the use of the Fund in those two countries has broadly mirrored the priorities endorsed by the Commission. The use of the Fund's resources is meant to catalyse and encourage longer-term engagements by development agencies and bilateral donors.

30. The Commission has an important role in the Fund's governance arrangements, providing overall policy guidance on the use of the Fund in countries under its consideration. Funding envelopes and the priority plan for short-term critical interventions proposed by national authorities and the United Nations presence in the country are then endorsed under the authority of the Secretary-General. The Fund has an independent Advisory Group, selected by the Secretary-General, which is scheduled to meet for the first time in the fall of 2007. By May 2007, the Fund had received US$ 221 million in pledges against a target of US$ 250 million. Contributions of US$ 135 million had been received.

31. Joint Steering Committees were established in both Burundi and Sierra Leone, in addition to existing mechanisms, to examine projects eligible for funding by the Fund. At the time the present report was prepared, the respective Joint Steering Committees in Burundi and Sierra Leone had approved a number of projects. In Burundi, projects amounting to a total of US$ 15,483,000 were approved, notably in priority areas of human rights and security-sector reform. Under the latter priority, the main project of quartering the National Defence Force (FDN) was approved in early April 2007. In Sierra Leone, projects have been approved under the two

priority areas of justice and security and youth empowerment and employment, amounting to a total of US$ 6,645,525.[3]

V. Conclusions

A. General remarks

32. During its first year of work, the Commission covered new ground in trying to **bring more coherence and impact to the international community's approach to peacebuilding**. This has not always been easy, and there has been an accompanying process of institutional learning. The main challenge now facing the Commission is to refine its approach for maximum impact on the ground so that the United Nations peacebuilding architecture becomes an effective instrument of international collaboration in support of countries emerging from conflict. The members of the Commission realize that the challenges of peacebuilding are immense and expectations are particularly high in the countries under consideration. The Commission will need to ensure that the peacebuilding processes in these countries remain on track through both qualitative and quantitative indicators to assess progress and provide, as necessary, early warning of risk factors. Such indicators will help the Commission evaluate the level of its involvement over a period of time and to rapidly address gaps that may arise in the implementation of the IPBS. The ultimate aim is to make peace self-sustainable.

33. The Organizational Committee reached an agreement on the **participation of institutional donors** in May 2007, with a view to ensuring the fullest participation of all relevant stakeholders in the work of the Commission. The Committee decided to issue standing invitations to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as to the European Community and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to participate in all meetings of the Commission, in accordance with paragraph 9 of its enabling resolutions, unless specified otherwise by the Chair of the Commission after due consultations with members of the Organizational Committee. These institutions have actively participated in meetings of the Commission at Headquarters and in the field, and their contributions have been helpful in better understanding the peacebuilding needs of the countries under consideration as well as the role these institutions play in overall post-conflict assistance efforts.

34. A direct impact of the Commission's consideration of the **two countries on its agenda, Burundi and Sierra Leone**, has been the aiding of the peace consolidation processes in those countries and the increased international attention given to them. As a result of that attention, relevant actors on the ground are paying more attention to the effects of their actions in terms of peacebuilding priorities, including taking into account the regional and subregional dimension, and those in themselves are positive contributions to the maintenance of peace and stability in the countries. The Commission's engagement with the Governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone has allowed for a focused effort by the international community, represented by the members of the Commission, to address the long-standing challenges of

[3] These figures are current as of 25 June 2007.

peacebuilding in post-conflict countries, notably by bringing together all relevant stakeholders in a transparent manner in support of this common goal.

35. As a testament to its commitment to an **inclusive and nationally driven process** in the countries under consideration, the Commission, during its first year of operations, aimed at maximizing the involvement of the field — including the national authorities, United Nations country teams and civil society organizations. In doing so, the Commission was able to further strengthen the lead by national governments and ownership by national actors as a whole, in partnership with the broader international community. The Commission's field missions to Burundi and Sierra Leone were useful in providing crucial information from the ground, which was and will continue to be instrumental in the Commission's consideration of the two countries and additional countries that may be on its agenda.

36. During its first year of work, the Commission has set new precedents in practical interaction between a United Nations intergovernmental body and the field and in employing flexible practices in its day-to-day business at Headquarters. Some **key lessons learned** are:

(a) The emphasis that substance should be led from the ground, with the national Government in the lead, and an inclusive process from the start with the involvement of other key national and international stakeholders;

(b) The importance of ensuring participation from the field in the country-specific discussions at Headquarters to ensure an inclusive discussion involving the Government and key stakeholders, including through videoconferencing links;

(c) The importance of the Commission's missions to the field which in turn provide the benefit of on-the-ground experience and knowledge to the Commission's work;

(d) The regular use of informal country-specific meetings, which enables a flexible format, open participation, including civil society organizations, and an interactive discussion, with each meeting tailored to specific needs;

(e) The focus on practical outcomes and the unique composition of country-specific meetings, which enables more effective collaboration to take place between the Commission's members.

B. Challenges for the Commission

37. The Commission's future work will need to focus on encouraging the peacebuilding processes in these countries to remain on track and all relevant actors to address challenges and gaps in a timely and coherent manner, based on the IPBS. A common and cohesive approach by the Commission's membership and the larger international community derives from a clear understanding that the work of the Commission needs to build on, coordinate and strengthen ongoing initiatives and should focus on resolving obstacles to implementation, which should result in concrete "peace dividends" for the people in the countries under consideration. In accordance with its mandate, the Commission has made available the outcome of its recommendations, and its discussions will increasingly focus on prioritizing and targeting its recommendations. This would allow an overview of the work of the Commission and give the United Nations system and other bodies and actors the

opportunity to take action on the advice of the Commission, as foreseen in operative paragraph 14 of General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005). A review of recommendations in follow-up meetings is essential.

38. While much progress has been made by the Commission with regard to the development of IPBS, the next stage will be to strengthen the relevance of the IPBS as a tool to generate enhanced — and long-term — support for peacebuilding activities in the countries under its consideration. The Commission needs to encourage the international engagement with Burundi and Sierra Leone to remain sustained, predictable and aligned to national priorities. In this regard, the Commission will further address and clarify the implementation of its mandate to "bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources" in support of post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery in the countries under its consideration (General Assembly resolution A/60/180, para. 2 (a)).

39. The Commission will also need to engage in further dialogue with all relevant stakeholders and donor countries, in particular bilateral and multilateral partners and the United Nations system, on their contributions to the IPBS and ensure that they take it into account. The Commission also needs to strengthen its capacities "to provide recommendations and information in order to improve the **coordination of all relevant actors** within and outside the United Nations". As such, the Commission, with the support of the Secretariat, will also encourage greater coherence within the United Nations system, including agencies, departments, funds and programmes, so that concrete benefits are delivered to the populations in the countries on the Commission's agenda. It will further engage the United Nations system on applying lessons from its integrated peacebuilding process to the United Nations peacebuilding efforts more generally.

C. Outstanding issues and recommendations

40. Although the Commission has not reached agreement on topics for future policy discussions, it has yet to consider issues such as how to ensure extended attention from the international community, the development of monitoring mechanisms and how to determine the appropriate time for ending the Commission's engagement with a country. The Commission anticipates that there will be a number of additional debates on these and other issues during the coming year.

1. Integrated peacebuilding strategies

41. The Commission underlines the need to develop tracking and monitoring mechanisms, taking into account existing mechanisms, to measure success to fulfil the tracking functions of the IPBS and therefore intends to strengthen the effectiveness of its engagement with Burundi and Sierra Leone by deepening the dialogue with all relevant stakeholders. A process for mapping completed, existing, and planned activities and projects, done in collaboration with the United Nations Secretariat, partners and relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, is essential in order to identify and address the gaps, inter alia, through developing a matrix that highlights the distribution of efforts and engagements in addressing those gaps. It will be important to enhance harmonization of all peacebuilding

efforts in the countries on the Commission's agenda with the identified priority areas.

2. Development of working methods

42. Under operative paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), the General Assembly and the Security Council decided that the standing Organizational Committee would be responsible for developing its own rules of procedure and working methods. Overall, the Commission recognized the importance of flexibility regarding its working methods, and the need to continue to develop its provisional rules of procedures in light of the evolving practical work of the Commission, as may be necessary. In this regard, as stated in paragraph 6 above, the Commission will examine proposals from the expert group to review these procedures when the proposals are made available. The Commission also intends to design a process to articulate its recommendations, in response to requests for advice, to the referring body on a specific country, and possibly on a specific theme, related to peacebuilding.

43. As part of the working methods established, the Commission decided to organize field missions to the countries under consideration, and in light of their usefulness for the work of the Commission, it intends to continue undertaking such missions. The General Assembly may wish to acknowledge the importance of field missions as a tool for dialogue and interaction with country level stakeholders, as well as to assess the peacebuilding priorities first-hand. In this context, the Commission wishes to bring to the attention of the General Assembly the fact that the issue of financing such missions needs to be appropriately considered and that such consideration could include all options, taking into account the fact that the Commission is a new body.

3. Working Group on Lessons Learned

44. The Working Group on Lessons Learned intends to consider a number of other peacebuilding issues, such as security-sector reform and development and post-conflict national reconciliation and dialogue. The timing and sequencing of these meetings will be coordinated with the Commission's country-specific workplans and priorities.

4. Advocacy of the work of the Commission

45. The Commission may wish to develop tools to better advocate and disseminate information on its work, which would further enhance its efforts. Greater publicity needs to be given to its work through outreach programmes. Doing so may also improve engagement with relevant actors by strengthening their commitment to implementation of coherent peacebuilding strategies.

5. Eligibility for Peacebuilding Fund support

46. The Commission is aware of the need to further enhance understanding by all stakeholders of the relationship between the Commission and the Fund, and affirms the need to promote the understanding of the role of each mechanism, particularly among key stakeholders on the ground, such as local governments, United Nations field agencies and civil society. The Commission also recognizes the need to ensure that the projects financed by the Peacebuilding Fund correspond to the identified

peacebuilding priority areas, and that they have a catalytic impact that will contribute to the stabilization of the countries under consideration and pave the way for the sustained support and engagement of other key stakeholders. It further underlines the need to develop monitoring mechanisms to measure success to fulfil the tracking functions of the IPBS.

47. The Commission acknowledges the importance of expediting the disbursement process of the resources allocated from the Fund, a matter that requires that the Fund seeks possible ways to deal with the issue in the future, and it therefore encourages the speedy disbursement of funds from the Fund for the implementation of specific projects on the ground. In this context, the Commission also recognizes the need to undertake careful planning where relevant to ensure there is no duplication or overlap with ongoing or planned interventions. In this connection, the Commission requests that the Secretary-General, as appropriate, inform the Commission on a regular and informal basis regarding the status of the Fund, without prejudice to the required annual report to the General Assembly and also undertakes to monitor closely the activities pertaining to the Fund in countries under its consideration.

6. Operational relationships with other bodies

48. Given its mandate as an intergovernmental advisory body that has a special relationship with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, the Commission still has to identify how best to engage with these bodies and the most appropriate mechanisms for providing advice and follow up. As such, further consideration should be given as to how the Commission can enhance its cooperation with various other United Nations intergovernmental bodies. In this regard, periodic interaction between the Commission and the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council will be useful. Such strengthened relations will also contribute to enhancing the visibility of the Commission's work and improving coordination among the bodies.

49. The Commission also recognizes the need to intensify its efforts to cooperate and coordinate with the relevant regional and subregional organizations to promote the peacebuilding process in the countries under consideration. It is therefore essential in this regard that the Secretariat collaborates with the secretariats of those organizations.

50. The Commission invites the Peacebuilding Support Office to accelerate its efforts for the fulfilment of its core mandate, in light of its authorized budget, namely to assist and support the Commission and to ensure better coordination within the Secretariat and the United Nations system in the field of peacebuilding as provided for in General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005).

Annex I

Formal meetings of the Organizational Committee

In its first year, the Organizational Committee held the following meetings to discuss a variety of topics:

- **23 June 2006**: Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons; adoption of the provisional rules of procedure; examination of requests made by the Security Council to provide advice on the situations in Burundi and Sierra Leone.
- **13 July 2006**: Review of process and schedule of country-specific meetings; endorsement of a list of participants; invitations to representatives of the Governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone to brief the Committee on key peacebuilding priorities.
- **9 October 2006**: Procedural preparation for the first set of country-specific meetings; referral of pending procedural issues to an ad hoc working group.
- **7 December 2006**: Discussion on the arrangements for the activation of the Peacebuilding Fund; arrangements for establishing a mechanism to draw on post-conflict experiences and shared lessons; consideration of possible field missions.
- **12 December 2006**: Selection of the chairperson of the country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone; decision on tasking a group at the working-level to review the provisional rules of procedure in 2007.
- **21 February 2007**: Adoption of a provisional calendar of meetings for the first half of 2007; discussion of the concept note on IPBS.
- **16 May 2007**: Decision to extend invitation to institutional donors, pursuant to paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005); discussion on the status of contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund.
- **6 June 2007**: Adoption of the provisional guidelines for the participation of civil society in the meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Annex II

Other activities of the Peacebuilding Commission

As part of its mandate to focus attention on the range of efforts necessary for recovery from conflict, the Peacebuilding Commission participated in a series of meetings involving United Nations officials and experts, academic and research institutions and non-governmental organizations. Focused on critical issues on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda, these meetings sought to bring important perspectives to bear on key dimensions of peacebuilding.

- **1 March 2007**: The International Peace Academy hosted a seminar for the Peacebuilding Commission on IPBS in advance of the Commission's work to develop integrated frameworks/compacts with Sierra Leone and Burundi.
- **2 May 2007**: At a joint presentation to the Peacebuilding Commission, the High Commissioner for Refugees Mr. António Guterres and the Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of the Internally Displaced Persons, Mr. Walter Kälin provided the Commission with an analysis of the relationship between peacebuilding and the resolution of the conditions of refugees and internally displaced.
- **14 May 2007**: The United Kingdom based NGO Tiri presented findings from its research on Integrity in Reconstruction in eight post-conflict countries.
- **29 May 2007**: As part of the Burundi country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, briefed the Commission.
- **30 May 2007**: The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Louise Arbour, briefed the Commission on her recent visit to the Great Lakes region.

Annex III

Membership of the Organizational Committee and the country-specific meetings on Burundi and Sierra Leone

Membership of the Organizational Committee (23 June 2006-27 June 2007)

Angola (Chair of the Commission until 27 June 2007)

Brazil

Bangladesh

Belgium (until 31 December 2006 succeeded by Luxembourg)

Burundi

South Africa

Chile

China

Croatia (until 27 June 2007)

Czech Republic

Denmark (until 31 December 2006 succeeded by Panama)

Egypt

El Salvador (Vice-Chair)

Fiji

France

Germany

Ghana

Guinea-Bissau

India

Indonesia

Italy

Jamaica

Japan

Luxembourg

Netherlands (Chair of country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone)

Nigeria

Norway (Chair of country-specific meeting on Burundi)

Pakistan

Panama

Poland (until 31 December 2006 succeeded by Czech Republic)

Russian Federation

South Africa

Sri Lanka

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

United Republic of Tanzania (until 31 December 2006 succeeded by South Africa)

United States of America

Additional members of the Burundi country-specific configuration (in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005))

Belgium

Canada

Denmark

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Economic Community of Central African States

European Community

Kenya

Nepal

Rwanda

Uganda

United Republic of Tanzania

African Development Bank

African Union

East African Economic Community

Executive Representative of the Secretary-General

Organisation internationale de la Francophonie

International Monetary Fund

Inter-Parliamentary Union

Economic Commission for Africa

World Bank

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region

Additional members of the Sierra Leone country-specific configuration (in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005))

Sierra Leone

Guinea

Ireland

Liberia

Sweden

African Development Bank

African Union

Central Bank of West African States

Commonwealth

Economic Community of West African States

European Community

Executive Representative of the Secretary-General

International Monetary Fund

Mano River Union

Organization of the Islamic Conference

World Bank

Economic Commission for Africa

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa

Participants in accordance with paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005)

International Monetary Fund

World Bank

European Community

Organization of the Islamic Conference

Annex IV

Timeline of Peacebuilding Commission engagement with Burundi and Sierra Leone

A. Burundi

- 23 June 2006: Referral from the Security Council
- 19 July 2006: Informal country-specific meetings on both Sierra Leone and Burundi
- 13 October 2006: Formal country-specific meeting
- 12 December 2006: Formal country-specific meeting
- 8 February 2007: Informal country-specific meeting on the Peacebuilding Commission's six-month workplan for Burundi
- 27 February 2007: Informal country-specific thematic discussion on promoting good governance
- 10-14 April 2007: Peacebuilding Commission delegation field mission to Burundi
- 19 April 2007: Informal country-specific meeting: debriefing from the field mission
- 27 April 2007: Informal country-specific discussion on first outline of Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi
- 9 May 2007: Informal country-specific thematic discussion on community recovery
- 29 May 2007: Informal country-specific thematic discussion on rule of law and security sector reform
- 6 June 2007: Informal country-specific meeting on process for review and finalization of Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi
- 20 June 2007: Formal country-specific meeting

B. Sierra Leone

- 23 June 2006: Referral from the Security Council
- 19 July 2006: Informal country-specific meeting on both Sierra Leone and Burundi
- 12 October 2006: Formal country-specific meeting
- 13 December 2006: Formal country-specific meeting
- 8 February 2007: Informal country-specific meeting on the Peacebuilding Commission's six-month workplan for Sierra Leone
- 20 February 2007: Working Group on Lessons Learned meeting with a focus on the upcoming Sierra Leone elections

- 28 February 2007: Informal country-specific thematic discussion on justice sector reform and development
- 19-25 March 2007: Peacebuilding Commission delegation field mission to Sierra Leone
- 27 March 2007: Informal country-specific meeting: debriefing from the field mission
- 9 May 2007: Informal country-specific meeting: first discussion of the Sierra Leone Compact
- 21 May 2007: Informal country-specific thematic discussion on youth employment and empowerment
- 22 June 2007: Formal country-specific meeting to discuss the draft Sierra Leone Compact

Annex V

Activities of Peacebuilding Support Office in support of the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund

1. The core functions of the Peacebuilding Support Office are to support the work of the Commission in all its substantive aspects, and to oversee the operation of the Peacebuilding Fund. In addition to these mandated responsibilities, the Office advises the Secretary-General in catalyzing the United Nations system as a whole to develop effective strategies for peacebuilding. This includes a role for the Office in convening all the relevant actors to launch strategic discussions on priorities and engagement related to peacebuilding within the United Nations, to ensure coherent and effective implementation of the work of the Commission and provision of effective support to the Commission, as well as to ensure appropriate lessons learning throughout the United Nations system on the basis of the Commission's work.

2. The Commission has set an active work programme, including regular meetings of its Organizational Committee, country-specific configuration meetings, working group on lessons learned and Chairs. The Peacebuilding Support Office has supported this programme, including through developing initial drafts of the Commission's calendar and workplan; liaising with the field offices and headquarters departments; preparing the substantive aspects of meetings, including documentation for the Commission's consideration; and participating in interdepartmental discussions within the Secretariat on peacebuilding. In addition, the Office, with support of the United Nations teams in the field, provided support to the Commission's field missions. The Office is also working with outside entities, donors and institutions on substantive peacebuilding-related events in order to ensure that the Commission receives appropriate advice and support from entities outside the United Nations system.

Annex VI

Chair's summary of Working Group on Lessons Learned meeting on Sierra Leone (20 February 2007)

1. In order to enrich the discussions of the Peacebuilding Commission's country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone, the Working Group on Lessons Learned convened its first informal discussion on lessons relevant to risk reduction and confidence-building in the context of post-conflict elections. The meeting was chaired by the Ambassador of El Salvador H.E. Carmen Maria Gallardo Hernandez and included expert panellists from the United Nations in Sierra Leone, Member States and civil society. (See attached programme.)

2. Sierra Leone's second post-conflict Presidential and Parliamentary Elections are scheduled for 28 July 2007. The meeting explored general risks posed by elections in post-conflict contexts and in Sierra Leone in particular as well as strategies to address such risks. Panellists noted the importance of identifying and addressing risks to Sierra Leone's democratic transition and supporting the Government's efforts in this regard. The experiences from countries that have conducted several rounds of post-conflict elections (Mozambique, El Salvador, Croatia, and Nicaragua) and the lessons extracted from those elections were also discussed.

3. The Ambassador of Sierra Leone to the United Nations and representatives from the United Nations in Sierra Leone stressed that preparation for the July 2007 elections are on schedule and proceeding without major difficulties. The National Elections Commission (NEC), although a new body is viewed as independent and credible by all parties, and has enjoyed support from the international community. The panellists highlighted a number of positive political developments in Sierra Leone such as the openness of the political space, media freedom, and freedoms of speech and association. However, they also noted that one of the biggest challenges in the context of the upcoming elections is that these political developments have not been matched by progress in the economic and social spheres. In the words of one of the speakers: "the openness of the political space has not delivered economic benefits for the people". Participants also noted that whereas the 2002 Sierra Leone elections were largely about "voting for peace" the 2007 elections are a referendum on the Government's capacity to deliver peace dividends.

4. Other challenges mentioned were possible disputes over election results, perceptions of possible abuse of incumbency power, the perceptions of undue influence by Paramount Chiefs, and possible youth mobilization for violence. While it was recognized that each country situation is unique and there is no "one-size fits all" formula that could take care of all these risks, panellists suggested a number of confidence-building and risk reduction measures for addressing these challenges drawing on lessons learned from other countries as well as from Sierra Leone's own past elections. Such measures could include:

(a) Regular dialogue and public debates among all party leaders and members;

(b) Adoption of a Code of Conduct for Political Parties (this should be regularly updated and include accountability and enforcement measures);

(c) Strengthening of electoral institutions (NEC, PPRC);

(d) Capacity-building for civil society institutions to engage in civic and voter education, elections monitoring and observation;

(e) Support to media organizations and the development and enforcement of a media code of conduct;

(f) Constructive engagement of the Sierra Leone diaspora community especially in the area of campaign financing;

(g) Public statements by political leaders in support of national unity.

5. It was also noted that regional dynamics (including the current situation in Guinea) and their impact on the electoral preparations would need to be closely monitored. A number of speakers stressed the importance of creating and strengthening electoral dispute mechanisms and promoting legislative reforms noting in particular that "preparations should not be limited to the day of the elections but should also anticipate possible post-election challenges".

6. There are a number of initiatives already being undertaken in this regard by the Government of Sierra Leone with support from the United Nations and other partners. Sierra Leone recently adopted a Code of Conduct for Political Parties and a Media Code of Conduct which are now being widely disseminated. Under the auspices of the Political Party Registration Commission (PPRC) a mechanism has been set up for an inclusive all-party dialogue, the first such mechanism in Sierra Leone. Political parties engaged in regular dialogue through the PPRC are discussing issues such as security provisions for the elections and women's equal participation as candidates, voters and observers. Given lessons learned from the 2002 elections in Sierra Leone particular attention is being paid to security concerns and the role of the media especially community radio stations. A National Security Council Coordination mechanism has been set up to ensure adequate security for the election.

7. These efforts need the full support of the international community. Additional capacity-building and resources are needed to strengthen the NEC and other electoral institutions. The meeting ended with the Peacebuilding Commission members reiterating their support for the peace consolidation process in Sierra Leone and their commitment to closely follow the preparations for the July elections.

8. In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked all participants for having contributed to a rich discussion. The Chair agreed to send a summary note of the discussion and recommendations to Peacebuilding Commission members, especially the country-specific configuration on Sierra Leone chaired by the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands.

Annex VII

Chair's summary of Working Group on Lessons Learned meeting on Afghanistan Compact: successes, challenges and lessons (17 April 2007)

1. The primary purpose of this meeting of the Working Group on Lessons Learned was to enrich the discussions of the Peacebuilding Commission on the drafting of the Integrated Peacebuilding Frameworks/Compacts for Sierra Leone and Burundi. The meeting was organized in cooperation with the International Peace Academy and the Center for International Cooperation and was chaired by the Ambassador of El Salvador, H.E. Carmen María Gallardo Hernández.

2. Participants noted that compacts and frameworks for post-conflict countries are increasingly seen as potentially important instruments for supporting peacebuilding initiatives. They represent an attempt to provide a framework for engagement with a post-conflict country on the basis of mutual accountability and joint commitment. In the process of developing such compacts the following dimensions were highlighted as critical: national ownership, a consultative process to ensure buy-in and inputs from all relevant stakeholders, an effective mechanism for monitoring and evolution, effective prioritization and sequencing of challenges and gaps to be addressed, and a limited number of measurable qualitative and quantitative benchmarks.

3. It was stressed that the context in which a cooperation framework or a compact is developed is critical and influences all other elements such as the timing, the scope, and the mechanism for effective monitoring and follow-up. Therefore the Peacebuilding Commission and other international actors involved would need to avoid the application of "one-size-fits-all" templates and focus on developing context-specific cooperation instruments. Participants agreed that the effectiveness of compacts and frameworks need to be evaluated over a period of time.

4. However, preliminary lessons on the implementation of the Compact include: the need to harmonize and limit the number of benchmarks, ensure a manageable number of partners on the joint monitoring committee, strengthen the national government's coordination and leadership role, raise awareness about the Compact among the population and strengthen accountability mechanisms for the implementation of identified commitments.

5. In conclusion, it was noted that further discussions and comparative analysis of the existing frameworks for cooperation in post-conflict situations maybe helpful in supporting the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

6. The Chair thanked all panellists and participants and noted that a summary from the meeting would be circulated to all members of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Annex VIII

Chair's summary of Working Group on Lessons Learned meeting on regional approaches to peacebuilding (8 June 2007)

1. Burundi and Sierra Leone, the two countries under consideration by the Peacebuilding Commission, have highlighted the need to underpin peacebuilding in their subregions as part of their integrated peacebuilding strategies. Recognizing the importance of regional approaches to peacebuilding, the third meeting of the Working Group on Lessons Learned focused on selected experiences from Africa and Central America in addressing the regional dimensions of conflict and regional strategies for peacebuilding. In specific, the meeting focused on several subregional initiatives in the Great Lakes region and West Africa as well as the Contadora-Esquipulas peace process and the International Conference on Refugees in Central America. The meeting was chaired by the Permanent Representative of El Salvador H.E. Carmen María Gallardo Hernández and brought together expert panellists, including a distinguished former Minister of Foreign Affairs from El Salvador, member states and civil society representatives.

2. The two speakers who focused on Africa confirmed the regional dimensions of African conflicts but drew attention to the specificities of each subregion. For example, West Africa is a more compact and integrated region with various subregional institutions. While conflicts in neighbouring countries have consequences across West Africa, there are also various subregional mechanisms for conflict management and peacebuilding. Meanwhile, the Great Lakes is a region that now encompasses eleven countries with various degrees of cohesion beyond the three core states — Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Until recently, the region did not have a common definition or coherent subregional institutions.

3. In West Africa, the most serious problems with regional repercussions have included the rise of civilian militia groups, weak governance, dire socio-economic conditions, youth unemployment, proliferation of small arms and predation of natural resources to finance conflict. However, West Africa also has strong regional assets including intergovernmental institutions such as ECOWAS, ECOMOG and the Mano River Union, the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) as well as various civil society networks such as the Mano River Women's Network.

4. The conflicts in the Great Lakes were greatly fuelled by the steady flow of refugees and armed groups, the illegal exploitation and export of natural resources and the failure of the state throughout the region. In the absence of a regional approach to deal with these problems, conflicts in various countries became intricately interconnected. It was only after the Rwandan catastrophe that regional approaches gained proper attention. The appointment of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Great Lakes in 1999 gradually led to an extended international process which was supported by the United Nations and the African Union. That process in turn culminated in the conclusion of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region in December 2006, although the Pact has yet to be ratified by member states. Meanwhile, the Secretariat of the International Conference has now been established in Burundi.

5. In Central America, the conflicts that reverberated throughout the region in the 1980s had various internal and external dimensions. The absence of democracy and socio-economic inequality within individual States was compounded by cold war politics and extensive intervention of external actors in the affairs of the region. The Contadora peace process (which was actively supported by Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela) was initiated in the early 1980s to prevent the internationalization of the military conflicts in Central America while generating a regional solution to several interlocking conflicts. Although the Contadora process itself was not successful, it prepared the grounds for the Esquipulas process that followed. The combined Contadora-Esquipulas process had several mutually reinforcing elements: affirmation of multilateralism, searching for a political solution, advancing democracy, socio-economic reform, demobilization and demilitarization and the principle of the non-interference in the region's affairs by outsiders. The Central American peace process proved to be lengthy but ultimately successful.

6. During the conflicts in Central America, two million out of a total population of eight million were uprooted by civil wars. Given the regional scope of the problem, one of the most important peacebuilding initiatives was the International Conference on Central American Refugees held in May 1989, known by its Spanish acronym CIREFCA. This initiative sought a durable solution for the problems of refugees, returnees and displaced people within the framework of social and economic development in the region. Initially starting as an international conference, CIREFCA evolved as part of the ongoing peace process in the region. Coordinated by UNHCR and UNDP, and supported by the resources of the international community, CIREFCA enabled the Governments of the region to link emergency assistance to ongoing development plans. Innovative ideas promoted by CIREFCA (such as Quick Impact Projects or QIPs) have subsequently been adopted in other contexts. While CIREFCA was unable to transform the region's deep-rooted socio-economic inequalities, it was an important model for regional peacebuilding in addressing the problems of war-affected populations within a larger framework.

7. The four presentations on Africa and Central America were followed by comments from the floor. Speakers affirmed the utility of regional approaches to peacebuilding and welcomed the opportunity to learn from cross-regional experiences. They also raised additional issues which further enriched the discussion. The concrete observations and recommendations that are particularly relevant for the work of the Commission are as follows:

(a) Traditionally, there has been greater appreciation of the importance of regional approaches in conflict resolution and peacemaking rather than peacebuilding;

(b) While peacebuilding efforts at the country level are indispensable, they should be complimented with regional approaches. Peacebuilding should not be exclusively state-centric but should address the transnational dimensions of conflict and opportunities for peacebuilding;

(c) Regional approaches to peacebuilding go beyond establishing regional institutions. In fact, they should capitalize on existing institutional mechanisms to address problems that cannot be resolved at the country level;

(d) In this context, the long-standing partnership between ECOWAS, the United Nations and the European Commission merit special attention. The European Commission is committed to reinvigorating regional structures in West Africa and the Great Lakes by drawing upon previous experiences;

(e) The European Commission is also interested in developing regional funding envelopes through the European Development Fund (EDF) to support the peace and security architecture of the African subregional organizations as well as exploring how to adjust EDF financing to the specific needs of fragile and post conflict States. The European Commission is also examining ways of cooperating with partners in the field through, for example, a tripartite ECOWAS/United Nations/EU capacity programme;

(f) From a sectoral programming perspective refugee flows, small arms, youth gangs and natural resource management are promising areas for regional cooperation. However, it is particularly important to identify concrete problems in each subregion and to programme around them through cross-country or border zone projects;

(g) In West Africa a regional approach to youth unemployment and the extractive industries (along the lines of the Kimberley Process for diamonds) would be particularly appropriate;

(h) In the Great Lakes region, the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region provides a powerful instrument for regional peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Commission can play an important role in supporting the ratification and implementation of the Pact;

(i) More broadly, since socio-economic development is essential for sustainable peace, regional economic integration and trade can further enhance regional approaches to peacebuilding. The spillover effects of regional economic growth would have far-reaching positive impacts on sustainable peace and development;

(j) The international community currently does not have a wide range of peacebuilding tools and instruments that can be deployed at the regional level. Many governments as well as intergovernmental organizations (including the United Nations) do not programme at the regional level. Instead, donors as well as United Nations agencies generally operate at the country level. Given its mandate, the Peacebuilding Commission would be well-placed to urge donors to provide funding for peacebuilding initiatives at the regional level.

8. In closing, the Chair highlighted the relevance of the topic for the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and thanked the panellists and all the participants for their contributions to the meeting.

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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 26 July 2007 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to you at the end of another violent day in the Occupied Palestinian Territory due to the continuation by Israel, the occupying Power, of its illegal policies and practices against the Palestinian people and its determination to continue on the path of violence rather than peace. While the Palestinian leadership is taking every step possible to promote stability and enhance the chances for peace, the occupying Power continues taking actions that undermine these steps and threaten the prospects for peace and stability.

The Israeli occupying forces continue carrying out military incursions and raids throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The ongoing raids have included daily arrest campaigns in which dozens of Palestinians have been arbitrarily detained in addition to the thousands of Palestinians already being detained and imprisoned by the occupying Power. Moreover, these incursions are typically violent operations endangering the safety and well-being of the Palestinian civilian population in those areas and involve the harassment, humiliation and physical ill-treatment of the civilians. One tragic example in this regard occurred in the village of Taqu' near Bethlehem, where Israeli soldiers beat 20-year-old Jihad Al-Sha'er to death. According to medical reports, the young man was bludgeoned to death and had not received any gunshot wounds, contrary to the story presented by the Israeli occupation forces. The brutal murder of this civilian is yet further indication of the total disregard for Palestinian life that the occupying Power has repeatedly displayed through its lax treatment of such blatant criminal acts by its forces. In addition, the occupying Power continues to carry out illegal extrajudicial killings of Palestinians, with at least three Palestinian men killed today by the occupying forces in a targeted missile airstrike at their car in Gaza City and another two men killed in military raids in the southern Gaza Strip.

At the same time, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to impose a suffocating siege and closure on the Gaza Strip, completely restricting the freedom

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of movement of the Palestinian civilian population and denying it access to the basic requirements for a dignified life and violating, collectively and individually, their most basic human rights. Despite allowing the entry into Gaza of daily subsistence needs of food, fuel and medicine, the occupying Power continues to deprive Gaza of other vital commodities, including building and other industrial goods. Seventy-five per cent of Gaza's factories have already shut down because of this Israeli siege and large-scale construction projects by United Nations agencies have been halted, denying thousands a chance of employment, even if only temporarily, and preventing the needed reconstruction and redevelopment of much of the damaged and destroyed civilian infrastructure. Further, I wish to recall the recent warning of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East that without an end to the Israeli siege of the Gaza Strip, the humanitarian situation will continue to decline and the inhabitants of Gaza will shortly become completely dependent on outside aid for survival.

The continuation of all such illegal, inhumane and provocative actions by the occupying Power are totally contradictory to the Israeli Government's statements of commitment to the peace process and dialogue with the Palestinian leadership, which, despite the difficult situation on the ground, continues to exert efforts to calm the situation and pursue a just, peaceful settlement of the conflict with Israel. The repeated military assaults and the continuing siege on Gaza, in addition to Israel's non-stop unlawful colonization of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, undermine every effort to move towards peace, for, contrary to its spoken words, these actions show the true intentions of the occupying Power to continue oppressing the Palestinian civilian population and continue its illegal occupation.

There is, despite the many difficulties of the current situation, an opportunity to move towards peace in the region, as evidenced by the various international, Arab and Palestinian efforts being exerted in this regard. Just yesterday, 25 July, a historic visit to Israel was undertaken by two Arab Foreign Ministers, representing the League of Arab States, to promote the Arab Peace Initiative. Moreover, United States President George W. Bush has called for an international conference in the coming months to bring the parties together in order to resume the peace process, based on the clear understanding that peace and security in the region can only be realized through an end to this foreign military occupation and the establishment of a viable, contiguous independent Palestinian state. These opportunities must be seized and built upon and the illegal actions of Israel, which move us all in the opposite direction, must be rejected, and Israel must be compelled to cease its violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, to abide by resolutions of international legitimacy and to seriously pursue peace in good faith.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 289 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 5 July 2007 (A/ES-10/393-S/2007/411), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

In follow-up to the above-mentioned letters, it is my profound regret to inform you that, since my last letter to you two days ago, at least 13 more Palestinian civilians have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces, raising the total number of martyrs killed since September 2000 to 4,624 people. (The names of the martyrs identified are listed in the annex to the present letter.)

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

Annex to the identical letters dated 26 July 2007 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Names of martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (From Sunday, 8 July 2007, to Thursday, 26 July 2007)

Sunday, 8 July 2007

1. Mahmoud Najeeb Nazzal

Thursday, 12 July 2007

2. Mohammad Omar Salah Ziab

Thursday, 19 July 2007

3. Ali Zuhdi Hallas

Sunday, 22 July 2007

4. Mohammad Abu Saif
5. Abdel Rahman Al-Kafarneh
6. Mohammad Ma'rouf (19)
7. Mostafa Abbas

Thursday, 26 July 2007

8. Omar Arafat Al-Khateeb
9. Khalil Zaid Al-D'aifi
10. Ahmad Hassan Al-Bal'aawi
11. Shareef Brais
12. Jihad Al-Sha'er
13. Mahmoud Ali Abu Daqqa

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* The total number of Palestinian martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces since 28 September 2000 is 4,624.

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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda item 13
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 26 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I transmit to you herewith a statistical summary of Israeli violations committed from 16 to 22 July 2007 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 13, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 26 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Israeli violations and acts of aggression from 16 to 22 July 2007

Air violations

On 16 July 2007:

- At 1200 hours an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Kafr Shuba area;
- At 1621 hours an Israeli enemy warplane overflew `Ayta al-Sha`b.

On 18 July 2007:

- Between 0710 and 1500 hours an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over `Alma al-Sha`b, circled between Riyaq and Baalbek, then left over the sea off Naqurah;
- Between 0920 and 1230 hours Israeli military aircraft overflew the Nabatiyah, Jazzin, Zahrani, Hasbayya, Bint Jubayl and Naqurah regions at very high altitudes, breaking the sound barrier over occupied Palestinian territorial waters;
- Between 0930 and 1120 hours two Israeli warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over `Alma al-Sha`b heading north, circled over all regions, then left over the sea off Naqurah;
- Between 1108 and 1145 hours two Israeli warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over Rumaysh, circled over the regions of the South and the Western Bekaa, then left over the sea off Naqurah;
- Between 1130 and 1135 hours two Israeli warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over Naqurah heading north, proceeded to a point west of Tyre, then left over the sea off Naqurah;
- Between 1130 and 1215 hours two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over `Alma al-Sha`b heading north, circled over the regions of the South, then left over Yarun;
- Between 1200 and 1215 hours two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over `Alma al-Sha`b heading north, proceeded as far as Beirut, then headed south and left over the sea off Naqurah;
- Between 1225 and 1300 hours two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over `Alma al-Sha`b heading north, proceeded to a point west of Tyre, then left over Kafr Kila;
- Between 1250 and 1300 hours two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over `Alma al-Sha`b heading north, proceeded to a point west of Beirut, then headed south and left over the sea off Naqurah;
- Between 1405 and 1605 hours an Israeli reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over the sea off Tyre heading east, circled over the regions of the South, then left over `Alma al-Sha`b.

On 19 July 2007 between 1130 and 1255 hours, an Israeli reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over the sea off Sidon, circled between the Western Bekaa and Tripoli, then left via the same place where it had entered.

On 20 July 2007:

- Between 1010 and 1115 hours Israeli enemy military aircraft overflew the Bint Jubayl area at very high altitude;
- Between 1259 and 2120 hours an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over `Alma al-Sha`b, circled over the regions of the South and the Western Bekaa, then left over Rumaysh.

On 21 July 2007:

- Between 1005 and 1430 hours an Israeli reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over Rumaysh heading north, circled over the southern regions, then left over `Alma al-Sha`b;
- Between 1400 and 1705 hours an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over the sea off Tyre heading east, circled over the southern regions, then left over Naqurah;

On 22 July 2007:

- Between 0715 and 1215 hours an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Nabatiyah and Bint Jubayl areas;
- Between 1500 and 1845 hours an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over the sea off Tyre heading east, and circled over the southern regions; it then headed north as far as Batrun, circled over the Jounieh, Dahr al-Baydar and Damur regions, then left over Naqurah;
- Between 1545 and 2230 hours an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over the sea off Sidon, proceeded as far as Baalbek, circled between Baalbek and Riyaq, then left over Naqurah.

Sea violations

None.

Acts of aggression in the field

On 16 July 2007:

- At 2100 hours, from the top of the Shahl area (occupied Shab`a Farms), Israeli enemy forces fired tracer-type machine-gun rounds into the air in the direction of Lebanese territory from a medium-calibre weapon;
- At various times between 2110 and 2145 hours Israeli enemy forces strafed the area around their Radar position (border of occupied Shab`a Farms) with medium weapons.

On 17 July 2007 between 0050 and 0145 hours Israeli enemy forces fired 12 flare shells over their Radar position (border of occupied Shab`a Farms).

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Note by the President of the Security Council

Following consultations among the members of the Security Council, the members agreed to elect the Chairmen of the following subsidiary bodies for the period ending 31 December 2007:

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003)

Leslie Kojo Christian (Ghana)

Belgium will continue to serve as Vice-Chairman for the said period.

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1636 (2005)

Leslie Kojo Christian (Ghana)

Belgium and Slovakia will continue to serve as Vice-Chairmen for the said period.

Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa

Pascal Gayama (Congo)

07-44202 (E) 270707

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Report of the Secretary-General on Darfur

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraphs 6, 13 and 16 of Security Council resolution 1556 (2004), paragraph 15 of resolution 1564 (2004), paragraph 17 of resolution 1574 (2004) and paragraph 12 of resolution 1590 (2005). It covers the period from early January through July 2007. Some of the aspects of the situation in Darfur were covered in the report of the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the hybrid operation in Darfur (S/2007/307/Rev.1), issued on 5 June.

II. Insecurity in Darfur

2. In recent months, the overall security situation in Darfur has been characterized by continual violence and insecurity. The nature of that insecurity, however, differed in the three states of the region. Western Darfur suffered from cross-border tensions between Chad and the Sudan, including direct hostilities in early April. Northern Darfur remained heavily affected by the conflict between the Government of the Sudan and the Darfur Peace Agreement non-signatory factions, particularly in the areas north of El Fasher and in Jebel Marra, while in Southern Darfur persistent tribal conflict also continued to result in violent attacks. In a disturbing development, elements of the two signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement, namely the Government of the Sudan and the Minni Minawi faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A), clashed on several occasions in March. The most significant security development of the reporting period, however, was the increasing violence against the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), as well as the broader United Nations and international non-governmental organization community in Darfur.

3. I am deeply saddened to inform the Council that the United Nations lost its first peacekeeper in Darfur on 25 May, when Lieutenant Colonel Ehab Nazih, an Egyptian military officer deployed to Darfur as part of the United Nations light support package, was murdered at his residence in El Fasher. The exact circumstances of the a k are still under investigation; however, it is known that late in the evening on 25 May, three armed men broke into the private house shared by Lieutenant Colonel Nazih and seven other UNMIS military, police and civilian

staff, and took money and valuables from the occupants before shooting Lieutenant Colonel Nazih. He was rushed to the AMIS level II hospital, where he was pronounced dead on 26 May 2007. I wish to extend my deepest condolences to the family of Lieutenant Colonel Nazih as well as to the Government of Egypt, and to salute a peacekeeper who perished in the service of peace.

4. The UNMIS Coordinator in El Fasher, with the cooperation of the UNMIS Force Commander and the Department of Safety and Security of the Secretariat, is overseeing efforts to ensure a thorough investigation and tightened security measures for the safety of United Nations personnel.

5. In addition to the killing of Lieutenant Colonel Nazih, numerous attacks were launched against AMIS personnel during the reporting period, leaving a total of 11 peacekeepers dead. On 1 February, an AMIS staff member was shot dead by unknown men outside the Kasab camp for internally displaced persons in Kutum, Northern Darfur. Three AMIS soldiers were killed in an attack on 5 March at an SLA-Minawi checkpoint in Gereida, Southern Darfur. On 31 March in Northern Darfur, a helicopter transporting a senior AMIS delegation, including the AMIS Deputy Force Commander, was shot at in the general area of Kurni, which is controlled by the Abdul Wahid faction of the SLM (SLM-Wahid). Furthermore, five AMIS peacekeepers were killed in an attack by SLA-Minawi forces on 1 April while guarding the water point in Umm Barru, Northern Darfur. On 10 April, an AMIS soldier died of injuries sustained in an attack by unidentified gunmen near Sortony, Northern Darfur. Four days later, on 14 April, the body of an AMIS officer was found near AMIS headquarters in El Fasher, his car having apparently been stolen. In addition, a total of 25 vehicles belonging to AMIS and its contractor, Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE), have been carjacked since the beginning of the year, and an AMIS officer who was abducted on 10 December 2006 is still missing.

6. Additionally, AMIS continues to face serious impediments to the performance of its functions. On 27 May, for instance, the United Nations assisted AMIS in negotiating the release of one of its helicopters, which had been impounded by members of the national security force while on a reconnaissance flight in Umm Hosh, Western Darfur. There have been also impediments of a bureaucratic and administrative nature.

7. The humanitarian community in Darfur is also increasingly subject to violence. The incidents are too numerous to list, but a summary indicates the gravity of the situation: between January and mid-June 2007, 61 humanitarian vehicles were carjacked, 69 staff were temporarily abducted and 37 convoys were ambushed and looted, with assaults and injuries increasingly common during those ambushes. A particularly egregious incident occurred in Nyala in January, when five United Nations staff members, three AMIS personnel and 13 non-governmental organization workers were arrested and detained by Government security forces on charges of misconduct. All were physically assaulted, and one female staff member was sexually assaulted. To date, none of the officials involved in the incident has been brought to justice. Such incidents are seriously affecting the ability of humanitarian organizations to provide assistance.

8. There have also been disturbing reports of indiscriminate attacks causing civilian casualties. Earlier in 2007, the Government of the Sudan carried out several aerial bombardments of non-signatory strongholds in Northern and Southern Darfur, including Bamina; in Bahia in Western Darfur; and in Anka, Umm Rai and Birdik

(Northern Darfur). Bombings were also carried out in the areas of Wadi Korma and Ein Siro in Northern Darfur, killing two civilians in addition to a large number of sheep, cattle and camels. In an interview with the BBC Arabic Service on 23 January, Sudanese President Omer al-Bashir confirmed that aerial bombardments against the non-signatories had taken place, but contended that rebel strongholds had been targeted, not civilians.

9. A lull in the Government's aerial bombardments followed, lasting until 19 April, but was broken by Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) bombing raids in Northern Darfur. Between 19 April and 3 May, there were 13 days of confirmed bombardments of rebel positions by SAF. Several of those were in the Umm Rai area in Northern Darfur, at a time when the non-signatory factions of the SLA had extended invitations to the international community to attend a planned commanders' conference at that location. On 29 April, rebel factions near Umm Rai shot down an SAF Mi-24 attack helicopter. One pilot died in the crash and another is still being held by the rebels. The Government of the Sudan confirmed the incident, but stated that the helicopter had been on a reconnaissance mission. On 28 May, a Government of the Sudan Antonov aeroplane conducted aerial reconnaissance over Umm Hosh, Anka and Umm Rai in Western Darfur. One day later, on 29 May, SAF conducted air strikes on the village of Wakhaim, asserting that they were acting in self-defence in reaction to the rebel groups' meeting to develop plans to attack the Government.

10. Ground attacks against civilian villages have also occurred on several occasions over the past few months. On 10 February, armed militiamen attacked approximately 20 people near Bala Firash (Western Darfur), killing 6 and injuring 7. On 13 February, armed militias attacked Fanga Shouk (Northern Darfur), considered an SLM-Wahid stronghold. The fighting resulted in 20 civilian casualties and the looting of around 2,000 heads of cattle. On 18 March, armed militiamen attacked Aro Sharo (Western Darfur). Three civilians were killed in the course of the attack and a large number of livestock was stolen.

11. The reporting period was also marked by a resurgence of intertribal clashes, predominantly between Rizeigat (primarily farmers) and Tarjem (primarily cattle herders) in Southern Darfur, which claimed hundreds of lives. Following severe clashes in January, fighting between the two tribes persisted in February and March. In late March, Tarjem representatives peacefully demonstrated in Nyala against the continuous attacks by Rizeigat. Large groups from both sides have been reported in the area since the incident.

12. To a lesser extent, fighting among other tribal groups also occurred. In January, the Habaniya tribe clashed with the Fallata, and on 4 February, two Arab tribes, the Mahaliya and the Jalul, clashed around the Kabkabiya area of Northern Darfur. The Zaghawa tribe, which is supported by the SLM-Minawi group, battled with the Mima and Maaliya tribes between January and April. In a related incident, on 12 March SLM-Minawi soldiers attacked Maaliya tribesmen in Al Muturwad, Southern Darfur. Ten civilians were killed in the fighting, and 14 others were injured. On 26 April, some 300 armed tribesmen attacked internally displaced persons in the Argo and Dabanera camps near Tawilla, Northern Darfur, committing acts of looting, physical assault and kidnapping.

13. In March 2007, tension and violence increased between Government forces and elements of Darfur Peace Agreement signatory SLM-Minawi on three separate

occasions in both Northern and Southern Darfur. The most serious incident, however, took place on 24 March, when a gun battle erupted in Omdurman (Khartoum) in which nine people were killed, including eight SLM-Minawi members and one senior Government police officer.

14. In another incident, on 19 March, Government police officers and SAF soldiers exchanged fire in Nertiti (Western Darfur), which reportedly resulted in the death of several civilians. On the same day, a Government police vehicle was ambushed by suspected armed militiamen near Sirba (Western Darfur). In the course of the attack, eight policemen were seriously wounded, one policeman went missing, and several weapons, including a heavy machine gun, were stolen.

15. During the reporting period, tension also persisted between Chad and the Sudan. There were almost no attacks across the Chad-Sudan border in the first two months of 2007, but on 31 March Arab militia groups operating from Chadian territory attacked the two Sudanese villages of Tuiro and Moreina, located in Western Darfur close to the Chadian border. The attacks claimed the lives of about 300 persons, including civilians and internally displaced persons. About 8,000 people are said to have fled the area. On 9 April, Chadian and Sudanese forces clashed directly for the first time, when the Chadian National Armed Forces entered Sudanese territory in pursuit of Chadian armed opposition groups that had launched an attack into Chad. Sixteen SAF soldiers were killed. The following day, the Government of Chad apologized for what were described as "unintentional clashes", and media reports indicated a similar reaction from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, who expressed his country's "determination" to seek a peaceful solution to the incident. Nevertheless, relations between Chad and the Sudan remained tense throughout April. Clearly, the incident resulted in a build-up of forces on both sides of the border.

16. Since the signing of the Riyadh agreement on 3 May, tensions between the Sudan and Chad appear to have decreased somewhat. In the last two weeks of May, more than 1,000 Sudanese rebels reportedly crossed into the Sudan from Chad following an ultimatum issued by President Deby for their withdrawal from Chadian territory under the terms of the Riyadh agreement. In addition, under the agreement, both countries have pledged to adhere to the provisions of the 8 February 2006 Tripoli Agreement and all subsequent agreements, including on the establishment of the joint military and security committee. Since June, the Government of Chad and leaders of the main rebel groups have been engaged in talks.

III. Human rights and protection

17. Human rights abuses continued in various forms during the reporting period. Among the major areas of concern were the aerial attacks on villages by Government aircraft, which are described above; attacks against internally displaced persons in and around camps; and sexual and gender-based violence against girls and women.

18. According to many reports, the aerial attacks on villages in Western and Northern Darfur were indiscriminate, as they failed to distinguish between military and civilian objects and used disproportionate means of warfare. The attacks on Umm Rai, located in Northern Darfur, which witnesses reported to UNMIS human

rights monitors, resulted in civilian casualties; the destruction of houses, a school and other property; and the death of livestock.

19. Carrying out even the most basic daily tasks poses a serious security risk for most of the civilian population in Darfur. Whether in camps for internally displaced persons or in villages, men, women and children are under constant threat of arbitrary arrest, attack, rape and murder by armed groups. Relations between internally displaced persons in the Abu Shouk camp (Northern Darfur) and the local police deteriorated in the beginning of the year, when internally displaced youths seized the weapons of the police after the latter had attempted to take away their mobile telephones. In response, the police arrested the camp's tribal elders and 94 internally displaced persons. The detainees were subsequently released, but five of them were again detained by the authorities in February and held for almost a month without charges being brought. On 17 February, two armed men dressed in military fatigues entered the Krinding II camp for internally displaced persons, outside El Geneina, Western Darfur, and burned a shelter. When one of the persons present protested, he was fatally shot in the head.

20. On 4 March, SLM-Minawi soldiers and members of the National Intelligence and Security Service fired at each other in the Kalma (Southern Darfur) camp, killing one internally displaced person and injuring two others. On 18 March, a leader was shot and injured by unidentified gunmen at the Hassa Hissa (Western Darfur) camp. In Western Darfur, on 3 April, a group of three armed men in green military-style uniforms opened fire in the Kondobe market, killing two civilians, including a 17-year-old boy, and injuring four others. In Southern Darfur, on 4 April, three female internally displaced persons were attacked and beaten by armed militia 10 kilometres east of the Sheria camp for internally displaced persons. One of the women was able to flee and reported the incident to other persons in the camp, but the other two were abducted by the men. A group of internally displaced persons went to search for the women and were fired at: one woman was killed and three others were severely injured. The two abducted women were later released.

21. During the reporting period, the female population of Darfur continued to be the target of systematic sexual and gender-based violence. In a single camp for internally displaced persons in Western Darfur, Massalit women and girls between the ages of 15 and 60 were involved in at least eight different reported incidents of sexual and gender-based violence between late January and early March 2007; in February alone, nine female internally displaced persons, including two girls under the age of 10, were raped in six separate incidents in various parts of Darfur, usually near camps for internally displaced persons; and, in a 14 April incident, a 10-year-old girl was physically assaulted and raped by an armed man on the outskirts of the Hamadiya camp in Zalingei (Western Darfur) while collecting firewood outside the camp with seven other women.

22. There were also reports that the SLM-Abul Gassim faction attempted to recruit adolescents in Menawashi and Mershing (Southern Darfur) in January. Villagers raised the issue with SAF, which ordered that all recruitment be stopped. SLM-Abul Gassim attempts to forcibly recruit adolescents in another camp also met with strong protests by residents. Those actions prompted many families and adolescents to flee Menawashi, Mershing and Dhuma to avoid recruitment. Despite SAF intervention, no significant return to the area has been witnessed to date.

IV. Humanitarian situation

23. I remain extremely concerned about the effects of the conflict on the civilian population, as the attacks and insecurity described in the present report continue to trigger civilian displacement. More than 150,000 people have been newly displaced since the beginning of the year. Those fleeing their villages are mostly seeking refuge in camps for internally displaced persons that in many cases are at or near capacity. That is the case in El Fasher (Northern Darfur), Zalingei (Western Darfur) and Nyala and Kass (Southern Darfur). The ongoing influx is further straining available resources and in some areas humanitarian indicators are once again deteriorating. A recent survey carried out at Otash camp (Southern Darfur) during the reporting period revealed a malnutrition rate above 15 per cent — the emergency threshold — with the highest rates among the newcomers.

24. I am also very concerned about the impact of the insecurity on the ability of the United Nations to deliver humanitarian assistance. Attacks on aid workers and their assets occur almost on a daily basis. In recent months, bombardments and general insecurity in North Darfur have forced humanitarian organizations to relocate their staff from several areas within the region. An estimated 83,000 internally displaced persons and conflict-affected residents in Tawilla and Tawilla Rural have lost access to medical support, while 200,000 beneficiaries are affected by the indefinite suspension of food distributions in Dar Zaghawa, Umm Baru, Birmaza and Hashaba. The relocation of humanitarian personnel from Sirba and Abu Soroug to Geneina (Western Darfur) has left some 50,000 conflict-affected people temporarily without any humanitarian assistance. It is estimated that 566,000 of the 4.2 million conflict-affected persons in Darfur are currently cut off from humanitarian assistance.

25. Despite those daunting challenges, the humanitarian community has, by resorting to creative solutions, returned to many areas that were previously inaccessible. Newly accessed areas include eastern Jebel Marra, Thur and Umm Dukhum. The polio vaccination campaign of 26 to 28 March also reached many areas that had been previously inaccessible. In Goldo (Western Darfur), 14,422 children under 5 years of age were immunized for the first time.

26. Between 21 and 27 March, the new Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes, made his first trip to the Sudan. After meeting senior Government officials and non-governmental organization and donor representatives, and travelling to Darfur and Juba, he concluded his visit with the 28 March signing of the joint humanitarian communiqué by the Government of the Sudan and the United Nations. The communiqué details various measures to facilitate continued and timely assistance to the beneficiary population in Darfur and stipulates the establishment of a high-level committee and a tripartite joint technical committee to ensure the agreement's full implementation. The committees are made up of representatives of the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations.

27. To date, the high-level committee has met three times and has visited several field locations in Darfur, to ensure that the new procedures are followed at the field level. Notable progress in the implementation of the communiqué has been achieved, which has eased some of the considerable bureaucratic impediments created by the Sudanese Government that humanitarian organizations had

experienced from January through March. Nevertheless, humanitarian organizations continue to encounter some administrative obstacles, including with regard to access to beneficiaries, hiring of national staff and the implementation of projects to address the issues of the protection of civilians and of sexual and gender-based violence. Close monitoring of the implementation of the communiqué will be essential in the coming months.

V. Implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement

28. At the same time, some movement has been registered in the implementation of elements of the Darfur Peace Agreement, signed on 5 May 2006 in Abuja. Signatory movement representatives have been incorporated into newly created local governments, and the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority has been established. However, there remains keen dissatisfaction among the signatories of the Declaration of Commitment over allocation of posts as part of power-sharing arrangements.

29. The Transitional Darfur Regional Authority was officially inaugurated at a ceremony held on 24 April in Khartoum, which was followed by another ceremony in El Fasher. It is chaired by Minni Minawi, Senior Assistant to the President of the Sudan, with the Governors of the three states of Darfur serving as his deputies. There is concern, however, that the institution does not have the logistical support or the resources necessary to make it an effective and functioning body, and also that it is currently insufficiently representative of the people of Darfur. In addition, the relationship between the Chairperson of the Regional Authority and existing government structures in the three Darfur states requires clarification.

30. While some elements of the Darfur Peace Agreement appear to be gaining momentum, serious concerns have been raised over the selective implementation of power-sharing provisions, which has exacerbated the security situation in some areas. By adding six new localities, the local bureaucracy has stretched its meagre resources even thinner on the ground. Representatives of the signatory movements are also pointing to other critical aspects of the Agreement that have not been implemented, such as Janjaweed disarmament and full implementation of the security arrangements.

31. At the same time, progress has been made in mobilizing support for the political process, with the objective of making the Darfur Peace Agreement more inclusive while building consensus for the urgent deployment of a United Nations-African Union force on the ground, as envisaged in the joint African Union-United Nations report on the hybrid operation in Darfur (S/2007/307/Rev.1).

32. The African Union and United Nations Special Envoys for Darfur, Salim Ahmed Salim and Jan Eliasson, conducted three joint missions to the Sudan/Darfur and to the region (from 12 to 17 February; 23 to 29 March; and 6 to 10 May) during which they consulted with high-level Government officials, including President Al-Bashir, First Vice-President Salva Kiir and Senior Assistant to the President Minni Minawi, as well as other stakeholders, representatives of factions that are non-signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement (including field commanders), civil society, opposition political parties, tribal leaders and internally displaced persons. The consultations were aimed at mobilizing support for an African Union/United Nations-led political process and at seeking views on how to make the Agreement

more inclusive. During those initial consultations, all the parties consulted, including the Government of the Sudan, agreed that there could be no military solution to the crisis in Darfur and that a political solution was the only way forward to a lasting peace. Both the Government and the other parties largely accepted the fact that the support base for the Darfur Peace Agreement needed to be broadened so as to ensure its ownership by the people of Darfur, while acknowledging that the Agreement could not be renegotiated in its entirety. Within that framework, those consulted agreed to cooperate with the efforts of the Special Envoys. There are, however, still areas of divergence, as some leaders of the non-signatory movements refuse to accept the Agreement as a basis for renewed negotiations.

33. On behalf of the United Nations and the African Union, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Darfur, Jan Eliasson, travelled to Asmara on 22 March to discuss with the Eritrean President, Isaias Afwerki, how to harmonize the joint African Union-United Nations mediation effort with the Eritrean initiative on Darfur. Special Envoy Eliasson travelled to Chad, also on behalf of both Envoys, to solicit the Chadian authorities' support for the African Union/United Nations-led political process and for meetings with some non-signatories.

34. On 28 and 29 April, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya hosted a high-level meeting in Tripoli on the political process in Darfur. All key regional and international players participated, including the Sudan, Chad, Egypt, Eritrea and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, as well as the five permanent members of the Security Council. The Tripoli Consensus, which was adopted at that meeting, reaffirmed the importance of a comprehensive and sustainable political solution to the Darfur crisis and stressed the need for all national, regional and international peace initiatives to converge under African Union-United Nations leadership. It also urged the parties to accelerate preparations for negotiations, warned that those who obstructed the political process would have to bear the consequences, and encouraged the Special Envoys to intensify consultations and finalize their road map on a strategy and timeline for renewed negotiations.

35. On 8 June, the joint African Union-United Nations road map for the Darfur political process was finalized. It consists of three phases: convergence of initiatives and consultations; pre-negotiations; and negotiations. As a point of departure for the implementation of the road map, the African Union and the United Nations expect all parties to declare their serious commitment to achieving a political solution to the Darfur crisis, creating a security environment in Darfur conducive to negotiations, participating in and committing to the outcome of the negotiation effort, and ceasing all hostilities immediately.

36. Meanwhile, the African Union-United Nations Joint Mediation Support Team (JMST) has been expanded to support the work of the Special Envoys. As part of that strengthening, Pekka Haavisto (Finland) was appointed Senior Adviser to Special Envoy Eliasson early in June. He will be based primarily in the Sudan and the region and will assist in preparing the ground for the renewed negotiations.

37. On 15 and 16 July, the second international meeting on Darfur was convened in Tripoli by African Union and United Nations Special Envoys Salim and Eliasson. In its final communiqué, participants noted that the initial convergence phase of the road map had ended and endorsed the beginning of the pre-negotiation phase. The Special Envoys also proposed to convene a meeting from 3 to 5 August with leading personalities of the non-signatory movements in Arusha, United Republic of

Tanzania, in an effort to facilitate preparations for negotiations. That proposal was welcomed unequivocally. In addition, it was agreed at the meeting that invitations for the new round of negotiations should be issued by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General before the end of August 2007, requesting the Special Envoys to consult widely with all relevant stakeholders on the most appropriate date and venue for the talks.

38. At the same time, the African Union-led Preparatory Committee for the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC), inaugurated in November 2006, has made efforts to pave the way towards the projected DDDC. In the course of the reporting period, the Chairperson of the DDDC Preparatory Committee, who assumed charge earlier this year, completed a first round of consultations at the community level with stakeholders in Nyala (Southern Darfur), El Fasher (Northern Darfur), Zalingei and El Geneina (Western Darfur). A broad range of Darfurian stakeholders, including representatives of civil society, the native administration, political parties, Darfur Peace Agreement signatory and non-signatory factions, as well as internally displaced persons, have been consulted, with a view to identifying their main interests and concerns related to the conflict.

VI. United Nations support for the African Union Mission in the Sudan

39. The Tripartite Mechanism established to facilitate the speedy implementation of the United Nations light support package to AMIS has continued to meet regularly since its inception last December. At its 10th meeting, held in April, the Mechanism received an update on the progress achieved so far in the implementation of the light support package.

40. With respect to that package, of a total of 184 personnel, 154 have been deployed to the Sudan. That number includes 83 military officers, 34 police officers and 37 civilian staff members. With respect to equipment, the main outstanding items are 36 armed personnel carriers. During the reporting period, the deployment of military and civilian personnel to Darfur has been hampered by continued insecurity and the scarcity of office and living accommodation that meet United Nations security standards. However, the construction of an additional 110 residential units for light package staff is expected to be completed soon, which will help to expedite deployment.

41. The heavy support package will entail the deployment of military, police and mission support personnel and equipment, as well as civilian staff to provide support in a range of areas, including civil affairs, humanitarian liaison, public information and support for the Darfur political process. Details of the package were communicated to the Government of the Sudan by the Secretary-General and the African Union Commission Chairperson in identical letters addressed to President Al-Bashir in January 2007.

42. In his response, dated 6 March 2007, President Al-Bashir expressed reservations and requested clarification with regard to some aspects of the package, and proposed that further discussions take place to address them. In order to provide clarity on those issues, a high-level African Union-United Nations team held a consultative briefing on 9 April in Addis Ababa with representatives of the

Government of the Sudan. Comprehensive clarifications were provided by the African Union and the United Nations on the heavy support package as well as on the observations raised by the Government. On 16 April, the Government of the Sudan gave its agreement to the full heavy support package, the cost of which is estimated to be $287.9 million.

43. In addition to the urgently needed contribution by Member States of troops and police, deploying the heavy package will also require the agreement of the Government of the Sudan on land and water drilling in Darfur and its cooperation in clearing essential items currently held in Port Sudan; the deployment of two additional AMIS battalions with the equipment necessary to ensure protection for African Union and United Nations personnel; and the restructuring of AMIS from eight to three sectors. Deploying the heavy package will also require the immediate support of international partners for the expansion of seven AMIS camps to accommodate the deployment of the two additional AMIS battalions. Implementation teams have been established by the United Nations in Khartoum and El Fasher to expedite the deployment of the heavy package.

44. A budget of $68.6 million has been provided to the heavy support package by drawing from UNMIS resources to cater for expenses up to June 2007. I anticipate that almost all of the allocated resources will be directed towards the acquisition of assets that will be required to implement the heavy support package.

45. The United Nations and the African Union have agreed on troop contributors for all 11 military units included in the heavy package. As agreed, we have given preference to African troop contributors wherever possible, and, in our effort to proceed with full transparency, we have submitted to the Government of the Sudan a list of the selected troop-contributing countries and the units that they will be providing.

46. With respect to the police component of the heavy support package, 47 police-contributing countries have committed individual officers. As agreed, the United Nations will aim to ensure that the majority of those officers come from African Member States. Additionally, in close consultation with the African Union, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has selected Bangladesh, Nigeria and Pakistan to provide three formed police units to the heavy support package. As with the troop-contributing countries, the Secretariat has informed the Government of the Sudan of the selection.

VII. African Union-United Nations hybrid operation

47. Deliberations on the hybrid operation between the African Union and the United Nations began in Addis Ababa early in 2007. On the basis of those deliberations, a joint report was finalized detailing all aspects of the hybrid operation. As the Council will recall, I subsequently transmitted the joint report on the hybrid operation in Darfur (S/2007/307/Rev.1) to the Security Council on 5 June 2007. The report was also forwarded to President Al-Bashir through identical letters from the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and from me on the same day.

48. As with the heavy support package, the United Nations and the African Union jointly provided a technical briefing to the Government of the Sudan on the hybrid

operation. The briefing, which took place on 11 and 12 June, provided the Government delegation with comprehensive clarifications on the hybrid operation, as detailed in the joint report. The consultations took place in a constructive atmosphere, and the Government delegation agreed to the deployment of the hybrid operation. President Al-Bashir confirmed his Government's acceptance of the hybrid operation during the 17 June visit of the Security Council to Khartoum.

49. It is also important to note that, in addition to accepting the hybrid operation, the Government delegation reconfirmed the need for an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire accompanied by an inclusive political process. I welcome this in view of the fact that a solution to the crisis in Darfur will require concerted action on both the peacekeeping and political tracks. While the Government delegation accepted the hybrid, it also outlined concerns and expressed the hope that the Council would take those concerns into account when developing a resolution authorizing the operation.

50. Now that the Government of the Sudan has reached agreement regarding the deployment of the hybrid operation, it will be important for the Council to provide a mandate for the operation as soon as possible. At its 79th meeting, on 22 June 2007, the African Union Peace and Security Council issued a communiqué authorizing the hybrid operation, which included elements for a mandate based on the joint African Union-United Nations report on the hybrid. A financial addendum (S/2007/307/Rev.1/Add.1) to the hybrid report with detailed cost estimates for the hybrid operation was issued on 5 July 2007. Given the complexity, magnitude and unique nature of this operation, it may be necessary to consider the establishment of another senior management post in addition to those reflected in the hybrid report (S/2007/307/Rev.1), at the level of Assistant Secretary-General, to manage all administrative and financial aspects of this enormous operation.

51. On 29 June, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations convened a meeting with potential troop- and police-contributing countries for the hybrid operation. As the United Nations continues to seek contributions for this massive undertaking, we will do our utmost to maintain the African character of the operation while also ensuring that all troops deployed are sufficiently equipped and up to United Nations standards in order to enable them to operate in such a challenging environment.

52. In order to ensure strong leadership in Darfur prior to the deployment of the hybrid operation, the African Union and the United Nations have appointed Rodolphe Adada, who has been the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Congo since 1997, as the Joint Special Representative of the African Union and the United Nations for Darfur. Prior to the deployment of the hybrid operation, he will be the Head of AMIS. I have been in regular contact with the Joint Special Representative, who arrived in Khartoum on 4 July. The African Union has also appointed General Martin Agwai of Nigeria as the Force Commander of AMIS, with the understanding that he will be the Force Commander of the hybrid operation when it replaces AMIS. General Agwai, who was most recently the Nigerian Chief of Defence and who has significant United Nations experience, arrived in El Fasher in the second half of July.

53. During my consultations with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on 13 July in New York, I welcomed the fact that the Government of the Sudan agreed with African Union-United Nations plans for the hybrid operation, and I noted the high expectations of the Security Council that an effective

deployment would occur rapidly. I also stressed the importance of progress towards holding peace negotiations in late August or early September and the need for increased emphasis by the international community on development issues in Darfur. In our discussion, the Chairperson shared his view that a comprehensive ceasefire was within reach and stressed the importance of ensuring that those who would not join the African Union-United Nations led peace process faced serious consequences. The Chairperson and I further agreed on the importance of Security Council unity in supporting the authorization and implementation of the hybrid operation. We also agreed on the need for rapid progress in the implementation of the hybrid operation in Darfur, including, as immediate priorities, United Nations-African Union agreement on deployment plans and timelines, senior management, mission structure and personnel generation. These operational plans will be further developed by the United Nations and the African Union during a joint planning session to be held in Addis Ababa early in August.

VII. Observations

54. While the situation in Darfur remains very precarious, I am encouraged by the Government's agreement to the deployment of the hybrid operation. I intend to move forward expeditiously, in full cooperation with the African Union, with the implementation of this crucial peacekeeping initiative. The successful deployment of the hybrid operation will very much depend on the Government's cooperation and assistance, especially with regard to the provision of adequate land, permission to drill for water and the timely clearance of critical mission-support items through customs. In addition to the provision of critical support by the Government of the Sudan and the full deployment of the heavy support package, the international community should also work together towards finalizing the process of force generation within 30 days of the authorization of the mandate and deploying the headquarters and management elements of the hybrid operation as soon as possible. It will be vital to transfer authority from AMIS to the hybrid operation as soon as effective operating capability and command and control structures are on the ground.

55. Meanwhile, I am very concerned about the continuing violence and insecurity in Darfur. Although the humanitarian communities strive to provide protection and assistance to those affected by the conflict, violence against civilians has continued. This is especially true for girls and women, who are victims of widespread violence, including systematic rape. It is imperative that all those involved be brought to justice, and I call on the Sudanese authorities to review their national laws and judicial procedures to ensure that they adequately address the deplorable violence against girls and women.

56. I reiterate my deep concern over the bombing by the Government of the Sudan of areas in Northern and Western Darfur. While the number of aerial bombardments by SAF decreased in February and March, they resumed in April and May. In addition, ground attacks by SAF and associated armed militias continued. Those indiscriminate attacks have brought death, displacement and prolonged suffering to Darfurian civilians. As I have noted on several occasions, as long as hostilities continue in Darfur, efforts to reach a political settlement and achieve durable peace will not succeed. It is imperative that the Government and all parties take effective steps to cease hostilities and act on their commitment to uphold the ceasefire

without delay. At the same time, inter- and intra-tribal clashes, which have exacerbated the already fragile security and humanitarian situation since the beginning of the year, need to be urgently addressed.

57. Humanitarian organizations have been forced to curtail some of their programming owing to the continuing insecurity. That has led to the deterioration of the living conditions of the millions of conflict-affected people who depend on humanitarian agencies for their survival. I appeal to all parties to abide by the ceasefire in order to allow humanitarian organizations to carry out their mission of bringing succour to the war-ravaged population.

58. In a positive development, following the signing on 28 March of the joint humanitarian communiqué on humanitarian assistance in Darfur, cooperation between humanitarian organizations and the authorities with regard to facilitating humanitarian operations has significantly improved. Joint mechanisms established to ensure the full implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement have been functioning successfully. I hope that the cooperation of the Sudan will continue to improve the operating environments for the United Nations and other organizations.

59. In addition, there is an urgent need for a comprehensive development strategy, supported by the Sudanese and the international community, to complement ongoing mediation and peacekeeping efforts. It is critical to mobilize support for recovery and rehabilitation in Darfur, especially with regard to the availability of water for the general population. I intend to explore that possibility with a view to alleviating the suffering of the population.

60. I am also extremely concerned that UNMIS and AMIS peacekeepers and United Nations and non-governmental organization aid personnel have increasingly become the target of violent attacks. Such attacks against African Union, United Nations and non-governmental organization personnel deployed in Darfur constitute serious violations of international law and of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. I therefore call on all parties to respect the status of both organizations and to create an environment that enables those staff members to deliver life-saving assistance and help bring stability to Darfur. I also urge the Government of the Sudan and the movements to take the appropriate measures, in their respective areas of control, to identify those responsible for the attacks on AMIS and UNMIS personnel and to hold them accountable.

61. Meanwhile, with regard to the political process, my Special Envoy for Darfur continues to work with his African Union counterpart, Salim Ahmed Salim, to engage signatories and non-signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement, as well as other stakeholders, in the process of finding a political solution to the conflict. That process has included three joint missions to the Sudan and several trips to the region to meet with the leaders of Chad, Egypt, Eritrea and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya as well as the 8 June issuance of a road map regarding the peace process in Darfur.

62. I was particularly encouraged by the outcome of the second international meeting on Darfur — a follow-up to the April Tripoli meeting — convened by the Special Envoys on 15 and 16 July in Tripoli in order to take stock of the progress made regarding implementation of the road map. The meeting noted that the first phase of the road map had been concluded, endorsed the beginning of the pre-negotiation phase and agreed that invitations for the projected peace talks should be issued before the end of August 2007.

63. I am appreciative of the initiative taken by Member States to bring renewed energy and commitment to the international community's efforts to take forward the process of resolving the Darfur crisis. In that context, the meeting of the Enlarged Contact Group for Darfur convened by France on 25 June gave additional momentum to African Union-United Nations efforts to reinvigorate the political process and strengthen peacekeeping in Darfur, and it focused international attention on the critical humanitarian situation and prospects for Darfur's reconstruction. I would like to acknowledge President Sarkozy and Foreign Minister Kouchner for having convened that timely meeting on the way forward in addressing the situation in Darfur. It demonstrated the international community's strong commitment to the resolution of that deteriorating crisis.

64. The coming weeks and months will be a crucial period in the quest for peace in Darfur. Joint African Union-United Nations efforts to achieve a political solution will gain momentum as the Special Envoys make every effort to commence negotiations. Meanwhile, implementation of the forthcoming Security Council resolution on the hybrid operation will be a major litmus test of the political will of all involved, including the parties, whose actions will be closely monitored by the international community.

65. As we enter this critical phase, it is essential that work on all four tracks of international engagement in Darfur continue in earnest. There must be substantial progress towards a political settlement and concrete action to strengthen peacekeeping through the hybrid operation. We must also ensure that the massive humanitarian assistance programme continues to sustain millions of people in Darfur. Finally, recovery, development and rehabilitation strategies must be put in place to ensure that these critical longer-term considerations are addressed.

66. This four-track strategy will require the full and sustained commitment of the international community. I count on the active support of all stakeholders as we continue to respond to the enormous challenges of restoring peace and prosperity to Darfur.

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Right of peoples to self-determination

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Letter dated 25 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I write in connection to the note dated 3 July 2007, from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General (A/61/963-S/2007/406), regarding the Syrian citizen Bashar Soleiman Ahmad Makat.

The accusations made by the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic in the annex to the aforementioned note are baseless. Not only does Mr. Makat receive regular medical attention and treatment, he has also been visited a number of times by members of the Red Cross, including the deputy chief of mission in Israel, who also met with the prisoner's family. His family will even visit in another two weeks.

Most importantly, Mr. Makat was examined as recently as three days ago, on 22 July, by a doctor who confirmed his recovery and stable condition and his receiving satisfactory medical treatment and attention.

In the future, it would behoove the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to check with his own Government, which receives updates on Mr. Makat directly from the Red Cross and knows that these allegations are without merit.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 13 and 66, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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